

We in Louisville are grateful to have had Tom walk us through every sunny day and every rainy night. After four decades, I am proud to join all of Louisville in thanking him for his service and wishing him the best as he moves on to a well-deserved retirement.

AN ECONOMIC LIFE-SAVER

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. economy shed 467,000 jobs in June, yet the economic climate would have been worse without the economic recovery legislation we passed in February. One leading independent economist reported last week that our stimulus measures prevented the loss of some 500,000 jobs in the last 3 months alone.

Many State and local governments, retailers, and service-providing employers have been able to save thousands of jobs that otherwise would have vanished without money provided in the stimulus package to communities and consumers. As a result of our action, the legislation's broad approach will leave the unemployment rate 2 percentage points lower by the end of next year. The stimulus impact has and continues to be an economic lifesaver for families all across this country.

CZARS

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KINGSTON. You know, we have all heard about czarist Russia. Over a 300-year period of time, Russia had 18 czars. Now, America has had czars, too—Ronald Reagan had one, George Bush had one, Bill Clinton had three, George W. Bush had four. This Presidency has 27—and maybe even as high as 33, nobody even knows—czars for all kinds of things like compensation, regulatory reform, terrorism, Guantánamo Bay, automobiles.

And who are these people? Well, we don't know, because even though the Constitution calls for the U.S. Senate to approve powerful people in powerful positions—and, indeed, they vote on hundreds of appointees—the czars go around this process. Now, they get paid \$172,000 each and they all have staffs. We are spending millions of dollars on people who have not been vetted by the U.S. Senate. We do not know who they are or what they are doing.

Why won't the President use transparency and have these people come before the Senate and talk to them? Why are they so smart, and why do you have to have duplication of already existing Cabinet jobs?

□ 1030

VIETNAM'S CONTINUING DISREGARD FOR CIVIL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today extremely frustrated and concerned over the continued arrest of pro-democracy dissidents inside Vietnam.

The Government of Vietnam continues to persecute journalists, bloggers, and other individuals who simply speak out against human rights abuses in the country of Vietnam. Yesterday I learned that Mr. Nguyen Tien Trung, another young and prominent dissident, was arrested by the Government of Vietnam. Mr. Trung is the leader of the Movement Democratic Youth, a group that mobilizes young people to demand change in the political regime in Vietnam. The recent arrests of lawyer Le Cong Dinh and Nguyen Tien further demonstrate Vietnam's continuing disregard for basic civil, political, and religious liberties.

I urge my colleagues to speak out on behalf of these brave men and women who are now imprisoned in Vietnam. Please join me in urging the Department of State to place Vietnam back on the Countries of Particular Concern list.

APPROPRIATION BILLS UNDER CLOSED RULES: BAD PROCESS LEADS TO BAD POLICY

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in protest of the way we're handling appropriation bills this year.

Traditionally, appropriation bills have come to the floor under an open rule, allowing Members to offer as many amendments as they would like as long as they give notice of such amendments. Now we have this year a process of closed rules, where appropriation bills are brought to the floor under structured rules. Members are limited in the number of amendments they can bring forward. And we're told that we need to do this because Members will offer so many amendments that it will slow the process down.

But when you have bills come to the floor with literally in some cases more than a thousand earmarks that have not been vetted by anybody, and obviously the Appropriations Committee is not vetting these earmarks, then we should have a process where people on the floor can at least see what's in these bills. We're not allowed to do that. We are bringing a bill to the floor today with just a few amendments that will be allowed to be offered.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to do this. We are told that people don't care about process. Perhaps they don't. But bad process leads to bad policy.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that the economic recovery plan is working in my district.

Yesterday, I was at the Johnny Ruth Clark Community Health Center in South St. Petersburg, Florida, where we made the announcement that \$1 million will go to expand that community health center. That community health center is the lifeline for that community, for the neighbors and businesses in that community. It's going to allow them to build new patient exam rooms. This \$1 million grant comes on the heels of a half million dollar grant that will allow them to hire new doctors, nurses, and medical professionals, very important because our community health centers are the places where folks receive quality, affordable health care.

Fortunately, in our health care reform bill, we are going to make an additional investment in our community health centers. They are the lifelines to our communities. This is one of the only ways we're going to make quality health care affordable and convenient for families and small businesses throughout our neighborhoods.

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS STEVEN DREES

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sense of sadness that I express my sincere condolences to the family, friends, and community of Peshtigo, Wisconsin's native son Steven Drees, who was killed in action in Afghanistan on June 28 while serving his country in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Private First Class Drees' enlistment began on July 25, 2008. He was assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colorado. Frequently decorated, he counted among his awards three Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart.

When any soldier falls, we mourn collectively and we pray as one people. And when we lose one of our very youngest soldiers so close to home, we are especially aggrieved.

Nothing can replace what Steve's family has lost, but if it's any consolation, let it be remembered that Private First Class Steven Drees remained dutiful and brave at all times and that he was a loyal United States soldier. That such a young man could serve so selflessly is a tribute to the nobility and fortitude of the people of Peshtigo, the people of Wisconsin, and the citizens of these United States.

Steven will never be forgotten.